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Title: Need to accord statehood to Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (ULUBERIA): Sir, I would like to raise an issue which is pending before the nation for so many years. It relates to according the statehood to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. It is a very old demand. As we know, Andaman and Nicobar Islands is a union territory. The democratic right of the people of Andaman to have their elected Government is being denied. Ultimately, the panchayat system has been extended and Zila Parishad and other systems are there. From the beginning, Andaman people are demanding that Andaman should be given the statehood. We raised this matter on several occasions in this House. In this context, one Private Members Bill was also moved in this House by Shri Basu Dab Acharia. When it was discussed, all sections of the House supported it. While replying to the debate, the then Home Minister assured that this is under the consideration of the Government. So I demand that we should not delay it further. The system of present administration is not working properly. After Tsunami, the reconstruction and rehabilitation works have not yet been completed. If there is an elected Government, then they will be in a better position to complete this work.

Therefore, I would request the Government that Andaman and Nicobar Islands should be given statehood status as early as possible.[R90]